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Message from the Mayor

With the holidays on the horizon, and Thanksgiving only one day away, I would like to take this opportunity to remind District of Columbia residents how important it is to help our neighbors. Remember to brighten someone else's day by spending time with them, sharing a warm meal, or making a contribution to an organization that cares for those who are less fortunate.

Sometimes it's great exercise to slow down, count our blessings and cherish those around us – our family, neighbors, and especially our seniors and young people. I encourage our citizens to look out for each other, to check on elderly neighbors and those who may need extra assistance during the holidays.

It's this time of year when we reach out to our community to give back – in all ways. On Monday, we helped give turkeys to needy residents throughout our city during our annual turkey giveaway. And last Saturday, I helped kick off the Fannie Mae Foundation's Help the Homeless Walkathon—a great event that brings people together from across our region.

For 18 years, the Fannie Mae Foundation has guided us to goodness through this novel walkathon. For 18 years, thousands of people have raised millions of dollars to provide urgently needed services for people who have no homes. There are about 15,000 people with no homes in our city on any given day. Many of them are children. The walk makes strides in helping them find a home.

The great humanitarian Albert Schweitzer once said, "One does not have to be an angel in order to be a saint." For our readers interested in getting involved with an organization during the holidays, there is still time to sign up. The good news is that first-timers can do just about anything. You can volunteer through Greater DC Cares, our local volunteer center, or contact an organization directly to offer your time and talent.

If you're interested in volunteering to help people during the holidays, call Greater DC Cares at (202) 777-4440 or 1 (800) Volunteer, or visit www.dc-cares.org or www.serve.dc.gov. Finally, when the holiday season passes, it's important to remember that volunteering and the spirit of service continue year-round.



AGENCY WEBSITES

Department of Human
Services

Office of Tax and
Revenue

Department of Parks and
Recreation

Department of
Employment Services

Metropolitan Police
Department

Office of Boards and
Commissions

Commission on the Arts
and Humanities

LINKS TO OTHER WEBSITES

Hands on DC

DC Convention and
Tourism

DC Public Library

Launching a New Department of the Environment

Few things are more important than protecting the environment in our city – for us and for future generations.

That's why I'm pleased that last week, the DC Council passed legislation creating a greatly needed District Department of the Environment. This department will consolidate environmental functions currently scattered among several city agencies and make sure that our city's natural environment is clean and healthy for the people who live here and for the millions of people who visit Washington, DC every year.

Here in Washington, our booming economic development has been a blessing for our flourishing economy. But, as development surges, we have seen an increased toxic storm water runoff that pollutes our rivers. This is just one of the reasons it is high time the Nation's Capital has a Department of the Environment to ensure that our natural environment is clean and healthy for our city's residents and the throngs of visitors that make their way to DC every year.

This innovative new department will tackle the many challenges we face in our city when it comes to preserving our environment. That means a focused approach on a range of critical issues.

I'm pledging a strong commitment to sustainable development in several ways. I will work to ensure new DC government buildings will be "green," meaning they will contribute to making our environment healthy and clean for everyone; make certain that development of city buildings in the works meet the "Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design" Silver standard; and ensure development along the Anacostia is sustainable and will minimize the impact on the Anacostia River.

Finally, I pledge to work hard to ensure that the new ballpark for the Washington Nationals is the most sustainable stadium in the nation. In addition, I will call on the private sector to help make the District a green city.

Within 180 days of enactment of this legislation, the new department will establish policy-making responsibility over vector control, tree management, and recycling and solid waste policies. In addition, the Environmental Health Administration storm water management functions formerly regulated by the Department of Public Works, and the Office of Energy will all be transferred to and controlled by the Department of the Environment.

This new department will focus solely on issues of environment and will therefore enable the city to operate more efficiently while we work to improve the city's air quality, clean up our local rivers and streams, and enhance our trees, parks, and open spaces.

Sales Tax Holiday Begins This Friday

It's the time of year again for another Sales Tax Holiday. This week I joined Sherryl Hobbs Newman, Deputy Chief Financial Officer for the DC Office of Tax and Revenue, in announcing that the District of Columbia will offer a Sales Tax Holiday from Friday, November 25, 2005, through Sunday, December 4, 2005.

I encourage everyone – residents and visitors alike – to shop in our neighborhoods and in downtown DC beginning the Friday after Thanksgiving. This is a great opportunity to save money and to support our local retailers. I'd like to thank Councilmember At-Large Carol Schwartz, who initially devised this innovative initiative.

The Sales Tax Holiday saves shoppers the usual 5.75 percent sales tax when purchasing clothes, accessories, and shoes. To qualify, each item must cost \$100 or less.

The sales tax exemption applies to each eligible item – no matter how many items are on the bill. It also applies to layaway sales, if the retailer and customer enter into a layaway agreement or the customer makes the final payment on the layaway order during the Sales Tax Holiday.

This is the second of two Sales Tax Holidays that are now held annually in our city. The previous holiday was held from August 6 through August 14. When retailers file their "Sales and Use Tax Returns," they should enter the total tax exempted due to the Sales Tax Holiday along with any other exempted sales tax on line 12 of their returns. As usual, retailers should list each tax-exempt item sold and its sales price in their records.

For more tax information, please visit the Office of Tax and Revenue Web site at cfo.dc.gov/otr or call the agency's Customer Service Center at (202)-727-4TAX (202-727-4829).



BRC Alerts

DCLMPC Partnership
Works!

DCOA Spotlight on Aging

DHS Outreach

DISB DC Financial
Gateway Express

OAG Inter Alia...

OAPIA Updates

OPGD Grant Funding
Alerts

Oral Health Forum on the Horizon

Next Wednesday, our city's Department of Health (DOH) Oral Health Division will host its second oral health summit: *Shaping the Future of Oral Health: From Cavities to Oral Cancer*. This is an important event for residents who want to learn more about maintaining healthy mouths.

The forum will be held on Wednesday, November 30 at the Sumner School, 1201 17th Street, NW. The program is designed to address the District's high rate of oral disease and explore ways to increase access to oral health care for low income residents.

City officials will join dental providers, insurers and policy makers in addressing oral health policy development, access to care, and replication and development of best practice models. Raising the awareness of oral health in our city is a first step in our efforts to develop an integrated oral health delivery system. The forum will provide a great opportunity for participants to network around issues that promote widespread collaboration, utilization of best practices and enhanced strategies for public policy development in advancing positive oral health outcomes.

Our city's high rate of poverty (approximately 10.6 percent of the District's population is living below the federal poverty level) combined with our large minority population (approximately 75 percent of the population is African American and Hispanic) results in very low oral health indicators.

To provide a more comprehensive approach to oral health policy, planning and programming the Department of Health convened the Oral Health Coalition. The department also implemented a number of programs aimed at increasing access to care, such as the school-based Dental Sealant Pilot Project.

The forum will feature several workshops that will address such issues as the school-based oral health programs, oral health for specialized populations and local initiatives.

For further information, visit doh.dc.gov, or call the Department of Health at (202) 671-5000.

National Capital Planning Awards Dinner

A city cannot achieve its fullest potential paying attention only to the pressing challenges of today—it must plan for its future as well. That's why I was pleased to take part in the National Capital Area Chapter (NCAC) of the American Planning Association's awards dinner honoring the District's efforts.

The awards recognize the hard work of planners across the District—notably at our DC Office of Planning (OP) and our District Department of Transportation (DDOT). Importantly, the awards recognize the progress being made throughout the District—from Columbia Heights, to Anacostia, to Georgetown, and of course for our exciting new Comprehensive Plan.

All of us are striving to build a city and region based on inclusiveness and opportunity. This is work that must continue and I am happy to have played a role in the process.

Hosted by the NCAC, the dinner honored outstanding work in the field of urban and regional planning, outstanding planning professionals, and those citizens, students, elected and appointed professionals, and media who have made outstanding contributions to the field.

During the ceremony, our DC Office of Planning received two NCAC awards. The awards recognized the Columbia Heights Public Realm Framework Plan for "Outstanding Work in a Plan," and the Vision for Growing an Inclusive City for "Outstanding Work in the Special Community Initiative" category. "Outstanding" is the highest level of recognition awarded to nominated projects.

The "Outstanding Work in the Special Community Initiative" award was given to the DC Office of Planning and Beyer Blinder Belle Architects and Planners, LLP for Vision for Growing an Inclusive City.

The NCAC-APA represents town, city, and county planners, representatives of related professions, elected officials and citizen planners in Washington, DC, and Montgomery and Prince George's counties in Maryland. The organization is dedicated to the promotion of sound planning and land use practices.

For more information on the NCAC-APA, visit http://members.tripod.com/NCAC_APA/



District Activities



Mayor Anthony Williams and other elected officials and community leaders spoke with residents at Citizen Summit IV. More than 2,000 people gathered at the Washington Convention Center for the nation's largest ongoing town hall meeting, which was initiated by Mayor Williams in 1999. The daylong summits are designed to elicit public input on the state of the District.



Mayor Williams gave away turkeys and other food items to families in need from all eight wards of the city. The distribution took place during his annual Thanksgiving turkey giveaway at Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church in Southeast.



Mayor Williams met with Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and Maryland Gov. Ehrlich at the Reagan Building.

Community News

- [Mayor Reaffirms Support for Washington Baseball Club](#)
- [Mayor Issues Statement Regarding AAA Designation of DC as "Strict Enforcement Area"](#)
- [House and Senate Conferees Approve Increased Spending for District](#)

Upcoming Events

[View All](#) [News Releases](#)

**11/18
to
12/16** **2005 Toys for Tots Campaign**
All DC Firehouses

**11/20
to
11/25** **Project Harvest**
8 am – 4 pm
4103 Benning Road, NE

